

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4991

S E C R E T SANTIAGO 3268

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT

SUBJECT: NEXT STEPS

1. AT A RECEPTION LAST FRIDAY EVENING IGNACIO PALMA (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE) TOLD ME SOME UP SENATORS HAVE MADE INFORMAL SOUNDINGS TO THE CHRISTIAN DEOCRATIC SENATE LEADERSHIP ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD OPEN THE WAY TO SOME GOC MOVE ON THE COPPER QUESTION. I ASKED IF HUGO MIRANDA MIGHT BE ONE OF THE UP SENATORS INVOLVED, PAMA'S ANSWER WAS: "NO, THEY WERE UP SENATORS WITH MORE CLOUT." FROM WHAT PALMA SAID, THE UP REPRESENTATIVES SEEM TO BE FOCUSING MORE ON SOME MODIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S ALREADY-EXERCISED "ONE-TIME AUTHORITY" TO SET EXCESS PROFITS UNDER THE COPPER AMENDMENT THAN ON ANYTHING RELATING TO COMPULSORY ARBITRATION. WHAT THE UP SENATORS SEEMED TO WANT WAS FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO TAKE AN INITIATIVE TO GIVE ALLENDE ADDITIONAL POWERS TO REVISE HIS ORGINAL EXCESS PROFITS DETERMINATION. ACCORDING TO PALMA, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS INDICATED INFORMALLY TO THE UP SENATORS THAT THEY WOULD BE PERFECTLY WILLING TO CONSIDER SOME ADMENDMENT PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT, BUT ABSOLUTELY UNWILLING TO PROPOSE ONE AND ALLOW ALLENDE AND THE UP TO ALLEGE THAT IT WAS THEIR IDEA.

2. COMMENT: IT IS INTERESTING TO HAVE THIS CONFIRMATION THAT THE GOC IS AT LEAST TOYING WITH THE IDEA OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT, AND SOME SCHEME WHICH MIGHT PRODUCE A CHANGE IN THE GOC POSITION. HOWEVER, NONE OF THE FOREGOING IS VERY SURPRISING. IT IS QUITE IN CHARACTER FOR THE SENIOR UP LEADERSHIP

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TO PLAY AROUND WITH SUCH AN IDEA ON THE BASIS THAT THE PDC WOULD

TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND THE UP WOULD KEEP ITS OPTIONS OPEN. I
DOUBT THAT PRESIDENT ALLENDE HAS MADE ANY REAL DECISION. WE
SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT THERE IS VERY LONG GAP BETWEEN INFORMAL
AND EXTRA-OFFICIAL HINTS THAT THE PDC DO SOMETHING, AND A
WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE GOC LEADERSHIP TO FACE THE PROBLEM
AND TAKE DECISIVE ACTION ITSELF.

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